

REMARKS

Reconsideration and allowance of the subject application are respectfully solicited.

Claims 1 through 28 are pending, with Claims 1, 4, 6, 7, 8, 9, 10, 11, 12 and 21 being independent. Claims 12 through 28 correspond to allowed Claims 1 through 17 of parent Application No. 09/263,078 filed March 8, 1999.

The Official Action set forth an election of species requirement between Species I (Fig. 22) and Species II (Fig. 24), stating that Claims 1 through 4, 12 through 16, and 18 through 25 are generic. In response to the election of species requirement, Applicants provisionally elect Species II (Fig. 24), with traverse, and respectfully submit that at least Claims 1 through 4, 9 through 16, 18 through 25, 27, and 28 are readable thereupon, with Claims 1 through 4, 12 through 16, and 18 through 25 being generic. However, the election of species requirement respectfully is traversed. Neither Applicants nor the Patent and Trademark Office should be put through the trouble and expense entailed in multiple filing and prosecution. Further, the making of an election of species requirement is not mandatory in all instances. It is submitted that it would not be an undue burden on the Examiner to examine all of the pending claims in the present application. Accordingly, in the interests of prosecution and economy of time, for Applicants, the Office, and the public-at-large, reconsideration and withdrawal of the election of species requirement is respectfully requested.

Applicants submit that this application is in condition for allowance, and a Notice of Allowance is respectfully requested.

Applicants' undersigned attorney may be reached in our Washington, D.C. office by telephone at (202) 530-1010. All correspondence should continue to be directed to our below-listed address.

Respectfully submitted,



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